



DIANE VAN DEREN

Endurance Athlete, Ultra-Runner on a Mission

In business, as in life, people are encouraged to focus the mind over matter. But, what if the mind won't cooperate? Diane Van Deren knows firsthand about living with brain trauma. While pregnant with her third child, scar tissue in her brain began triggering frightening and debilitating grand mal seizures. For ten years she tried to cope and manage the seizures with limited success until she took the radical step of having a kiwi-size part of her right temporal lobe removed.



The seizures stopped, but she also lost much of her ability to remember small things like turning off the oven, reading a map or following directions. In spite of this, she has become one of the world's most successful endurance racers including being the overall winner of the *2008 Arctic Ultra* 300-mile race while towing her own 45-pound sled across the frozen tundra in subzero temperatures. She is also the first woman to finish the even more grueling *430-mile Yukon Arctic Ultra* race. In January 2010, researchers at Mayo Clinic followed Diane as she climbed Aconcaqua in Argentine – her first mountaineering summit – and proclaimed the about-to-turn 50 Diane's peak aerobic capacity as better than normal for a 20-year old. While Diane's story is extraordinary, audiences find great encouragement and hope in listening to the way she faces each day with a high dose of practicality and optimism.

PRESENTATIONS:

Making Great Strides

Even though Diane would combat her epilepsy by strapping on her running shoes and heading towards the mountains while her children were young, she would often have four or five grand mal seizures a week. She learned through this that life must be lived in small doses-- similar to the way she runs a race. She breaks up her 100+ miles races in digestible pieces. Through this simple approach of small actions achieving greatness, she learned early on that life must be approached in the same way.

Through her story, audiences will learn how to approach seemingly overwhelming objectives in small, digestible elements. Diane's message about "don't think about what you can't do, but what you can do" resonates with business teams. Just as every mile accumulates to an ultra marathon, so does every small action within a company accumulate to overall success. **Audiences are encouraged to think outside the box and use the gifts and talents to their fullest potential.**

Age is just a Number

In a world of baby boomers and bodies beginning to slow, an almost 50 year old woman continues to set course records. In Diane's talk she explores scaling obstacles, overcoming adversity and steeling the mind to keep the body moving ahead. Diane examines the critical elements necessary for high-achievement---no matter the age--and developing the ability to overcome challenges.

Photos Courtesy of David Clifford / davidcliffordphotography.com

info@extremeconnection.net
888-999-2828 / 415-388-8068

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CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

- 1st womens/4th overall - Yukon Arctic Ultra 430-mile, Whitehorse, Canada
- Finisher - Tour de Mt Blanc 160 km, Chamonix, France
- 1st overall - Yukon Arctic Ultra 300 mile, Whitehorse, Canada
- 1st women's - Canadian Death Race 78 mile, Edmonton, Canada
- 1st overall - 24 hours in Frisco Trail Run, San Francisco, California
- 1st women's - Dances w/ the Dirt 50 mile, Hell, Minnesota
- 1st overall - Tahoe Rim 100 mile, Tahoe, California
- 1st overall - Big Horn 100 mile, Montana
- 4th overall - The North Face 100, Outdoor Endurance Challenge, Beijing Changping, China
- 4th women's - Big Horn, 100 Mile Trail Run, Wyoming
- 8th women's - Hard Rock Trail, 100 Miler, Silverton, Colorado



AWARDS

- National Geographic Adventure Magazine 2009 "Adventurer of the Year "
- Teva Everest Award "Female Trail Runner of the Year"
- Colorado Rockies Awards Dinner "Hal O'Leary Dedication Award"
- Colorado Sportswomen "Comeback Award" at annual awards dinner
- Hooked on the Outdoors Magazine "Runner up, Outdoor Person of the Year"
- Colorado Epilepsy Foundation "Achievement Award" & keynote address

KEYNOTE PRESENTATIONS

- Team 180 - Top Lacrosse Players of CO
- Collaborative Assistive Technology
- Colorado Hospital Association
- American Institute Construction Conference
- Epilepsy Foundation of America
- Cardiac Symposium, San Diego, CA
- Nat'l Parks & Rec Conf, Atlantic City
- Brain Injury Association, Vail, Colorado
- Ortho McNeil Pharmaceuticals, Denver
- Master Teachers Conference, Denver
- Character Counts, Las Cruces, NM
- Unlimited Adventure Series, Vail, Colorado
- Colorado Mtn Club, Annual Dinner Golden

MEDIA

- Television: ABC, ESPN, NBC today show (honored as "extraordinary mom")
- Press has included: *New York Times* January 20, 2010 "Medical Miracle Nears a Milepost"
- and on the front page July 9, 2009 "Brain Surgery Frees A Runner, But Also Raises New Barriers."



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